

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

## About the Inclusion of Light-Duty Diesel Vehicles in the Smog Check Program

Many of the Frequently-Asked-Questions (FAQs) listed below have been raised by members of the inspection and repair industry, new and used car dealerships and owners of diesel repair specialty shops participating in the diesel workshops. The information provided in the FAQs will be updated on the BAR's Web site as it becomes available.

### Diesel Inspection Procedures

#### What Smog Check test procedures are being planned for the new diesel inspection?

The proposed inspection will consist of three parts; a visual check of the emission control equipment, a check of the OBD system and a test for visible smoke.

All of these tests are currently performed on gasoline vehicles. However, there are some differences as indicated below:

- The visual check of diesel vehicles will be performed the same way as the test performed on gasoline powered vehicles except that the emission control components maybe different. The BAR will provide instructions for performing the visual inspection in the *Smog Check Inspection Procedures Manual*.
- The OBD-II check on diesels will be conducted the same way it is performed on gasoline vehicles. The BAR-97 cannot perform the OBDII check for any vehicles with the newer Controller Area Network (CAN) OBD communication protocol. Some diesel vehicles started using the CAN protocol as early as the 2003 model-year.
- The BAR and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) are working on a new visible smoke test procedure for diesels.

Once the studies regarding the smoke procedure are complete, and the draft procedures are finalized, they will be posted on BAR's Web site.

#### Will Smog Check technicians be required to do an ASM test on diesels?

No, dynamometer testing will not be part of the diesel inspection.

#### Will Smog Check technicians be required to check the fuel being used?

No. Although some operators of light-duty diesel vehicles use alternative diesel fuels, including various mixes of biodiesel, currently, there are no plans to require technicians to collect fuel samples as part of the Smog Check diesel inspection.

#### How long will technicians need to run a diesel engine during an inspection?

Although many factors affect the length of time it takes to do any type of inspection, the BAR expects most technicians to be able to complete the diesel inspection in approximately 15 minutes.

### Implementation Schedule and Other Miscellaneous Questions

#### When will diesel inspections begin?

The DMV will begin mailing notices to motorists who own diesel-powered vehicles subject to the program in January, 2010, for registrations due in April. However, change of ownership and out-of-state

inspections will be required starting on January 1, 2010. Unlike gasoline-powered vehicles, there is no six year exemption on diesels included in the Smog Check Program.

### **Why was 1998 established as the minimum model-year vehicle subject to the program?**

The law, as written, authorizing the inclusion of diesel vehicles into the Smog Check Program, required it.

### **Will any diesel vehicles be exempt from the program?**

Yes, all diesel vehicles over the maximum 14,000 Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) limit will be exempt from the Smog Check Program. Some small motor homes maybe subject to the program, but most have a GVWR that exceeds 14,000 pounds. The GVWR is indicated on a label located on the chassis or door jamb of the vehicle.

### **What other states smog check programs are inspecting diesel vehicles?**

Diesel vehicle inspection programs are operated in Nevada, New York, and Colorado.

## **Repairs and Subletting**

### **How does the BAR expect failed vehicles to be repaired?**

Currently, most diesel vehicle owners have their vehicles repaired at either a dealership or a diesel specialty repair shop.

### **Will subletting be allowed?**

BAR understands, subletting of repairs is not allowed when a vehicle fails a Smog Check, except under certain conditions (i.e., parts removed from vehicle, or exhaust system repairs). The BAR is reviewing subletting options for diesel repair and will provide further information during the regulatory process.

## **Test-Only Direction**

### **Will BAR be directing diesel vehicles to Test-Only stations?**

No, the BAR will not be directing diesel vehicles to Test-Only or Gold Shield stations when the program begins in January, 2010.

## **Tampering, Engine Changes**

### **Will Smog Check technicians be expected to identify modified or tampered emission control systems?**

Yes, CARB indicates that diesel vehicles subject to this program have been certified to meet strict emission control requirements by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and the CARB. As a result, Smog Check technicians will be required to fail vehicles with modified emission control equipment or devices that have not been approved by the CARB. Approved devices will have a label with a CARB Executive Order number on it.

### **Can BAR provide a web-based database available to help technicians identify which equipment is illegal?**

Information about aftermarket equipment devices that are approved by the CARB is already available on their website under "Aftermarket Parts" <<http://www.arb.ca.gov/msprog/aftermkt/devices/amquery.php>>.

You can search either by the device description or by the Executive Order number assigned to the device.

### **What about engine changes on diesels?**

The Smog Check Program engine change policy applies to engine changes on diesel vehicles subject to the program. To review the BAR Engine Change Policy go to the BAR Web site at:  
[http://www.bar.ca.gov/80\\_BARResources/07\\_AutoRepair/Engine\\_Change\\_Guidelines.html](http://www.bar.ca.gov/80_BARResources/07_AutoRepair/Engine_Change_Guidelines.html).

## **The Consumer Assistance Program (CAP)**

### **Will there be assistance for motorists who fail an inspection?**

Yes, diesel vehicles will be included in the CAP. Information about the CAP can be viewed on the BAR Web site at:  
[http://www.bar.ca.gov/80\\_BARResources/01\\_CAP&GoldShield/Factsheets/Consumer\\_Assist\\_FAQs.html](http://www.bar.ca.gov/80_BARResources/01_CAP&GoldShield/Factsheets/Consumer_Assist_FAQs.html).

The CAP offers two options for consumers whose vehicles fail their biennial Smog Check. Motorists may be eligible for either repair assistance or the vehicle retirement program. Repair Assistance allows qualified consumers to receive financial assistance toward emissions-related repairs up to \$500 to help their vehicles pass a Smog Check inspection. Eligible consumers can also receive \$1,000 to retire their high-polluting vehicle. The vehicle must pass a visual and operational inspection before it is retired.

## **Manufacturer Warranty Coverage**

### **Are warranties provided for diesel-powered vehicles different than for gasoline-powered vehicles?**

Yes, but they vary considerably between vehicle makes. Station technicians should inform Consumers that they can check their owner's manual to determine what warranty coverage they were provided by the manufacturer.

## **Station Licensing, Technician Licensing, Gold Shield Requirements**

### **Does BAR intend to establish new license requirements for diesel inspections or repairs?**

No, the BAR will not be establishing new license requirements specific to the new diesel program.

### **Will diesel repairs help a station qualify to meet the criteria to become a Gold Shield station?**

No, current regulations only allow repairs for tailpipe emission failures to be counted towards the required 10 repairs in a quarter. Station owners can obtain information about the Gold Shield Program and check eligibility status on the BAR Web site at:  
[http://www.smogcheck.ca.gov/80\\_BARResources/01\\_CAP&GoldShield/GoldShield\\_Stations.html](http://www.smogcheck.ca.gov/80_BARResources/01_CAP&GoldShield/GoldShield_Stations.html).

## **Training**

### **Will training be provided by BAR prior to implementation of diesel inspections?**

Yes, the BAR is reviewing options for diesel inspection training and will provide further information during the regulatory process. Other diesel repair based training is available through ASE, and other training sources.

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***--- Information on this Web site will be updated frequently so check it often. ---***